



County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Social Services

Bryce Yokomizo
Director

October 3, 2002

Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**RECOMMENDATION TO APPROVE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
FOR LONG-TERM FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY (LTFSS) PROJECT NO. 15
(ALL DISTRICTS - 3 VOTES)**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD

Approve the enclosed Implementation Plan for LTFSS Project No.15, Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction, providing financial assistance and housing counseling for families who are at risk of eviction due to financial hardship, not to exceed \$1.5 million, subject to an executed agreement between the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA).

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The purpose of this recommended action is to obtain your Board's approval of the implementation plan for LTFSS Project No. 15 and to enter into an Agreement with LAHSA to administer and evaluate the Project.

In 1999, your Board adopted a LTFSS Plan for CalWORKs participants and other low-income families. The Plan included 46 proposals which addressed the needs of families, one of which was the Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction Project which will provide financial assistance and housing counseling for families who are at risk of eviction due to financial hardship. Up to now, implementation of this Project has been pending.

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PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION (Continued)

On June 26, 2002, your Board allocated \$1.5 million in Performance Incentive funds for the Project for FY 02-03, transferring responsibility for the Project from the Community Development Commission to DPSS. The Department then collaborated with community partners in developing the enclosed implementation plan and has negotiated with LAHSA to administer and evaluate the program for DPSS.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended actions are consistent with the principles of the Countywide Strategic Plan, Goal 3, Strategy 3, to ensure that service delivery systems are efficient, effective and goal-oriented, and to collaborate across functional and jurisdictional boundaries.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The maximum contract amount for the Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction Project is \$1.5 million and will be funded exclusively with CalWORKs Performance Incentive funds. Therefore, there is no net County cost impact.

Of the \$1.5 million allocated for the Project, the funds will be disbursed as follows: Five percent (5%) will be used for administrative costs, with LAHSA receiving \$75,000 for expenses associated with program/funding administration. The balance, \$1,425,000, will be used for direct services, including rent/utility payments and follow-up housing counseling.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

On June 26, 2002, your Board approved \$1.5 million in Performance Incentives funding for the Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction Project. As the lead agency for the Project, DPSS has prepared the enclosed implementation plan for approval by your Board.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (Continued)

Performance Incentives funding may be used for the following purposes authorized by federal law: (1) In any manner reasonably calculated to meet one of the four purposes of the Federal TANF Program; or (2) To continue providing services and benefits that the State was authorized to provide under its former Title IV-A or IV-F State plans, which covered Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Emergency Assistance and Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training.

The four purposes of the Federal TANF Program are to:

1. Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
2. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage;
3. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and
4. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parents families.

Project No. 15 is reasonably calculated to meet the first purpose of the TANF Program. Low-income families often face the risk of losing permanent housing due to financial hardships. Without assistance, many of these families become homeless, either living on the streets or in emergency and transitional shelters. The Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction Project will provide eligible CalWORKs families with rent and/or utility assistance for up to two months, or a maximum of \$1,500 per family, to help prevent these families from losing their housing and becoming homeless. In addition, housing agencies will provide housing counseling services to assist families with maintaining housing.

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FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS (Continued)

The Project will serve families residing in Los Angeles County who are currently receiving CalWORKs assistance, or who were discontinued due to time limits. The Project will target families who have exhausted their CalWORKs time limits, but not to the exclusion of other eligible families. Families must be at risk of losing their housing because of non-payment of rent due to financial hardship, not for lease violations, and must demonstrate that they are experiencing a financial crisis (e.g., exhausted time limits), that could result in homelessness if assistance is not given. In addition, they must provide proof of need. Counselors will work with these families to develop a plan to maintain their housing.

The contract term will begin October 15, 2002, or one day following Board approval, whichever is later, and will continue through November 30, 2003. While direct services to participants will end June 30, 2003, LAHSA's evaluation of the Project will continue for an additional 90 days, through September 30, 2003, and a final report will be provided to DPSS by November 30, 2003. No payments will be issued for services provided after June 30, 2003.

The Contractor is in compliance with the Jury Service Program.

The enclosed Agreement has been approved as to form by County Counsel.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

No solicitation document was issued for the procurement of these services. State regulations allow contracting without competitive solicitation when services are to be rendered by a public agency. DPSS plans to contract with LAHSA to administer and evaluate the Project. LAHSA has the expertise and experience to bring up the needed services expeditiously to help ensure optimal utilization of the funds by June 30, 2003.

LAHSA's responsibilities will include releasing an RFP for referral agencies (ensuring Countywide coverage) to process and approve applications; reviewing proposals and selecting subcontractors; making all disbursements directly to landlords/utility companies; and evaluating the effectiveness of the Project.

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IMPACT ON CURRENT PROJECTS

The Project and this Agreement will assist CalWORKs families who are at risk of becoming homeless by helping them to maintain permanent housing.

Neither the Project nor the Agreement will infringe on the role of the County in its relationship to its residents, and the County's ability to respond to emergencies will not be impaired. There is no change in risk exposure to the County. The Agreement is in compliance with all requirements of Los Angeles County Code Section 2.180.010, Certain Contracts Prohibited.

CONCLUSION

Upon Board approval, the Executive Office, Board of Supervisors, is requested to return one (1) adopted stamped Board Letter and four (4) original-signed copies of the contract to DPSS.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryce Yokomizo
Director

BY:dk

Enclosures

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel

**Long Term Family Self-Sufficiency Implementation Plan
Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction
(Project No. 15)**

Background

In 1999, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted a Long-Term Family Self-Sufficiency Plan (LTFSS) for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) participants and other low-income families to create strategies that stabilize families by building their capacity to become self-sustaining. The LTFSS Plan included 46 proposals that address the needs of families receiving CalWORKs and other low-income families.

The following Implementation Plan represents one of the proposals under the Supporting Stable Housing section of the plan. It sets forth strategies for implementation of the Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction (Project No. 15). In June 2002, the Board approved \$1.5 million for the project for FY 02-03 only, transferring responsibility for the project to DPSS.

Project Funding

The Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction Project is funded through CalWORKs Performance Incentive funds awarded to the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS).

Project Description

This is a one-year project for FY 02-03 only. It will provide rent and/or utility assistance to eligible CalWORKs families (not exceeding \$1,500 per family) who are at risk of losing their housing because of non-payment of rent due to financial hardship, not for lease violations. Housing counseling assistance will be provided to assist families in maintaining permanent housing.

Contractual Arrangements

DPSS will contract with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to administer the program and funds. LAHSA will release an RFP for referral agencies (ensuring Countywide coverage) to process and approve Emergency Assistance to Prevent Eviction applications from eligible CalWORKs participants. LAHSA will make all disbursements directly to landlords/utility companies.

LAHSA will receive approximately \$75,000 for administrative costs; the technical assistance/training provider and referral agencies will also receive compensation; however, they must respond to the RFP to demonstrate their ability to serve the targeted population.

Target Population

Eligible participants must be families who are currently receiving CalWORKs assistance, or were discontinued due to time limits, and residing in Los Angeles County. The project will target families who have exhausted their CalWORKs time limits, but not to the exclusion of other eligible families.

Families must be at risk of losing their housing because of non-payment of rent due to financial hardship, not for lease violations, and must demonstrate that they are experiencing a financial crisis (e.g., exhausted time limits), that could result in homelessness if assistance is not given. In addition, they must provide proof of need. Counselors will work with these families to develop a plan to maintain their housing.

Services Provided

Funds to pay rental and/or utility arrears for up to two months will be provided to assist the family in maintaining permanent housing. The total amount of assistance that can be provided is limited to a maximum of \$1,500 per family. Follow-up housing counseling will be provided to families by referring agencies including, but not limited to: household budgeting skills; tenant/landlord mediation; locating alternative housing if necessary; or other issues concerning maintenance of stable housing.

Estimated Annual Costs

The estimated cost for Project No. 15 is \$1.5 million for FY 02-03. These funds will be disbursed as follows: Five percent (5%) will be used for administrative costs, with LAHSA receiving \$75,000 for expenses associated with program/funding administration. The balance of the funds would be used for direct services, including rent/utility payments and follow-up housing counseling.

Program Staffing

LAHSA will be responsible for releasing an RFP, selecting/monitoring referral agencies, making all disbursements, and reporting on the project to DPSS monthly; the referral agencies would screen participants, obtain required documentation and approval, and then forward disbursement requisitions to LAHSA for payment. In addition to its referring responsibilities, LAHSA would also provide technical assistance (training manuals, forms, etc.) and training to the other referral agencies.

Project Evaluation

To measure the effectiveness of the project, LAHSA will collect data on the families being served under the project through 9/30/03, analyze the data and submit the results to DPSS by 11/30/03.